

1. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus, comprising:

a first image carrying member configured to carry at least one image transferred from at least one original in increasing order of corresponding sheet numbers;

a second image carrying member configured to carry said at least one image transferred from said first image carrying member to at least one recording sheet;

a plurality of ejection trays including a first ejection tray configured to stack said recording at least one recording sheet, which is output in a straight or forward orientation, and a second ejection tray configured to stack said at least one recording sheet, which is output in a reversed orientation; and

a sheet transferring mechanism configured to transfer said at least one recording sheet to a nip formed between said first and second image carrying members, wherein said first image carrying member is configured to transfer ~~transfers~~ a first image of said at least one image to a first surface of said at least one recording sheet and, ~~simultaneously~~, said second image carrying member is configured to transfer ~~transfers~~ a second image of said at least one image to a second surface of said at least one recording sheet in response to a selection of either said first ejection tray or said second ejection tray in a double-sided recording mode so that either said first ejection tray or said second ejection tray stacks said at least one recording sheet in increasing order of page numbers, and the recording sheet follows a same transporting path to the selected ejection tray as the recording sheet follows in a single-sided recording mode.

2. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 1, further comprising a mode selecting mechanism configured to select either a single-sided recording mode or said double-sided recording mode.

3. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 1, further comprising a tray selecting mechanism configured to select either said first ejection tray or said second ejection tray.

4. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 1, further comprising a sheet selecting mechanism configured to select a sheet type for said at least one recording sheet, and wherein either said first ejection tray or said second ejection tray is selected in accordance with a selection made via said sheet selecting mechanism.

5. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 1, further comprising a plurality of sheet supplying mechanisms, wherein each sheet supplying mechanism of said plurality of sheet supplying mechanisms is configured to supply said at least one recording sheet to said sheet transferring mechanism.

6. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 5, further comprising a cassette selecting mechanism configured to select any one of said plurality of sheet supplying mechanisms.

7. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 5, further comprising a sheet selecting mechanism configured to select a sheet type for said at least one recording sheet, wherein any one of said plurality of sheet supplying mechanisms is selected in accordance with a selection made via said sheet selecting mechanism.

8. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 1, further comprising an extra sheet supplying mechanism configured to insert a first recording sheet of

said at least one recording sheet in an approximately straight or forward orientation, and wherein said first recording sheet is transferred from said extra sheet supplying mechanism to said first ejection tray via said sheet transferring mechanism.

9. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 8, further comprising a sheet selecting mechanism configured to select a sheet type for said at least one recording sheet, and wherein said extra sheet supplying mechanism and said first ejection tray are selected when said sheet selecting mechanism selects said sheet type for said at least one recording sheet to be a relatively thick sheet.

10. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 8, wherein said extra sheet supplying mechanism includes a manual sheet insertion tray.

11. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 10, further comprising a sensor for detecting an event wherein said manual sheet insertion tray is accessed by a user, and wherein said extra sheet supplying mechanism and said first ejection tray are selected when said sensor detects said event.

12. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein said first image carrying member transfers said first image of said at least one image from an odd-numbered page of said at least one original to an upper surface of a first recording sheet of said at least one recording sheet and, simultaneously, said second image carrying member transfers said second image of said at least one image from of even-numbered page of said at least one original to a lower surface of said at least one recording sheet when said second ejection tray is selected in said double-sided recording mode so that

said second ejection tray stacks said at least one recording sheet in said increasing order of page numbers.

13. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 3, wherein said first image carrying member transfers said first image of said at least one image to said first surface of said at least one recording sheet and said second image carrying member transfers said second image of said at least one image to said second surface of said at least one recording sheet in response to a selection made by said tray selecting mechanism of either said first ejection tray or said second ejection tray.

14. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 2, further comprising a control panel on which said mode selecting mechanism is mounted.

15. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 3, further comprising a control panel on which said tray selecting mechanism is mounted.

16. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 4, further comprising a control panel on which said sheet selecting mechanism is mounted.

17. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 6, further comprising a control panel on which said cassette selecting mechanism is mounted.

18. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 1, further comprising external host system wherein selections are made between a single-sided

recording mode and said double-sided recording mode, said first and second ejection trays, and a sheet type of said at least one recording sheet.

19. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 5, further comprising an external host system which selects between said plurality of sheet supplying mechanisms.

20. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein said first image carrying member is a photoconductive drum which carries said at least one image in the form of a toner image in accordance with an electrophotographic method and said second image carrying member carries said at least one image in the form of said toner image transferred from said first image carrying member.

21. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus, comprising:
an image reading mechanism configured to read at least one image from at least one original;

an image recording mechanism configured to perform image recording operations including image forming, image carrying, and image transferring processes so that said at least one image read from said at least one original is recorded onto at least one recording sheet;

a plurality of ejection trays into which said at least one recording sheet is ejected;
a plurality of sheet cassettes in which said at least one recording sheet is stacked prior to being used in said image recording operations; and

a sheet transferring mechanism configured to transfer said at least one recording sheet from one of said plurality of sheet cassettes to a nip formed between first and second image

carrying members, wherein said image recording mechanism performs said image recording operations in response to a selection of one of said plurality of ejection trays in accordance with said at least one image read from said at least one original read via said image reading mechanism in either a single-sided recording mode or a double-sided recording mode so that said at least one recording sheet is stacked in an increasing order of page numbers in said one of said plurality of ejection trays which was selected and, wherein a path of travel for said at least one recording sheet provided from said one sheet cassette to said one ejection tray is the same in both the single-sided recording mode and the double-sided recording mode.

22. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said image recording mechanism forms said at least one image in the form of a toner image in accordance with an electrophotographic method, said image recording mechanism comprising:

said first image carrying member configured to form said toner image and to carry said toner image thereon in said increasing order of page numbers starting from a first page; and

said second image carrying member configured to carry said toner image transferred from said first image carrying member, said first image carrying member transferring said toner image to a first side of said at least one recording sheet and said second image carrying member transferring said toner image to a second side of said at least one recording sheet.

23. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said plurality of ejection trays includes a first ejection tray configured to stack said at least one recording sheet output in a straight or forward orientation and a second ejection tray configured to stack said at least one recording sheet output in a reversed orientation.

24. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said at least one recording sheet stacked in said increasing order of page numbers is recorded in said single-sided recording mode.

25. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said at least one recording sheet stacked in said increasing order of page numbers is recorded in said double-sided recording mode.

26. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein either said image reading mechanism reads a first image of said at least one image from a first side of a single-sided original of said at least one original in a single-sided reading mode or said image reading mechanism reads first and second images of said at least one image from first and second sides, respectively, of a double-sided original of said at least one original in a double-sided reading mode.

27. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 26, wherein when said first and second images of said at least one image are read in said double-sided reading mode by said image reading mechanism, said image recording mechanism records said first and second images in said single-sided recording mode and outputs said at least one recording sheet in said increasing order of page numbers.

28. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 26, wherein when said first and second images of said at least one image are read in said double-sided reading mode by said image reading mechanism, said image recording mechanism

records said first and second images in said double-sided recording mode and outputs said at least one recording sheet in said increasing order of page numbers.

29. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 26, wherein said image reading mechanism reads said first and second images of said at least one image on both said first and second sides, respectively, of said double-sided original via a one time sheet transferring process in which said double-sided original is moved.

30. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 29, wherein said image reading mechanism comprises:

a first image reading unit configured to read said at least one image of said at least one original by moving said at least one original; and

a second image reading unit configured to read said at least one image of said at least one original by holding said at least one original at a predetermined position.

31. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 30, wherein said second image reading unit includes a moving member configured to move under a contact glass, said moving member being used as a part of said first image reading unit under a condition that said moving member is stopped.

32. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 30, wherein said second image reading unit is usable when said at least one original is placed on a sheet tray of said first image reading unit.

33. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 26, wherein said image reading mechanism includes a sheet reversing mechanism so that said image reading mechanism reads said first and second images of said at least one image on both said first and second sides, respectively, of said at least one original.

34. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said image reading mechanism includes a detector for detecting when said at least one image is attempted to be read from a blank white sheet in order to cancel reading of said at least one image.

35. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein one of said plurality of ejection trays is formed in a space between said image reading mechanism and said image recording mechanism.

36. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said image reading mechanism includes an ejected original tray configured to hold ejected ones of said at least one original, said ejected original tray of said image reading mechanism having a size slightly smaller than a projection area of said image forming apparatus.

37. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said at least one recording sheet is transferred in an approximately straight line when being transferred from a first sheet cassette of said plurality of sheet cassettes to a first ejection tray of said plurality of ejection trays.

38. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 37, wherein said first sheet cassette of said plurality of sheet cassettes is a manual sheet inserting tray.

39. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, further comprising a control panel located close to said image reading mechanism, said control panel comprising:

a singled-sided/double-sided recording mode selecting mechanism configured to select one of said single-sided recording mode and said double-sided recording mode; and

an ejection tray selecting mechanism configured to select one of said plurality of ejection trays.

40. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said image recording mechanism records said at least one image in an increasing order of corresponding sheet numbers.

41. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said image recording mechanism forms said at least one image in said increasing order of page numbers when said image reading mechanism reads said at least one image in said increasing order of page numbers.

42. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said image recording mechanism includes a first image carrying member which is a photoconductive drum and a second image carrying member which is a belt-shaped intermediate transfer member having a surface resistance in a range of from $10^5 \Omega$ to $10^{12} \Omega$.

43. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 42, further comprising a fixing mechanism configured to fix said at least one image which has been attached on both sides of said at least one recording sheet while said at least one recording sheet is being supported by said belt-shaped intermediate transfer member.

44. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 42, wherein said belt-shaped intermediate transfer member is heat resistant.

45. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, wherein said image recording mechanism performs said image recording operation in accordance with image information sent from an external host system, said external host system selecting one of said single-sided recording mode and said double-sided recording mode and one of said plurality of ejection trays.

46. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 21, further comprising a first external ejection tray unit that includes a first connecting sheet path connected to a sheet path of said image forming apparatus for turning and ejecting said at least one recording sheet sent from said image recording mechanism into one of said plurality of ejection trays, wherein said first external ejection tray unit is configured to stack said at least one recording sheet in said increasing order of page numbers.

47. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 46, wherein said first connecting sheet path is arranged along an edge portion of said one of said plurality of ejection trays.

48. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 47, further comprising a switching pawl configured to selectively switch between pathways for said at least one recording sheet to said one of said plurality of ejection trays and said external ejection tray unit.

49. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 46, further comprising a second external ejection tray unit including a second connecting sheet path connected to a sheet path of said image forming apparatus for ejecting said at least one recording sheet sent from said image recording mechanism in an approximately straight line manner into said one of said plurality of ejection trays, wherein said second external ejection tray unit is configured to stack said at least one recording sheet in said increasing order of page numbers.

50. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus, comprising:

first image carrying means for carrying at least one image in increasing order of corresponding sheet numbers;

second image carrying means for carrying said at least one image transferred from said first image carrying means;

a plurality of ejection tray means including first ejection tray means for stacking at least one recording sheet onto which said at least one image has been transferred in a straight or forward orientation and second ejection tray means for stacking said at least one recording sheet in a reversed orientation; and

sheet transferring means for transferring said at least one recording sheet to a nip formed between said first and second image carrying means, wherein said first image

carrying means transfers a first image of said at least one image to a first surface of said at least one recording sheet and, ~~simultaneously~~, said second image carrying means transfers a second image of said at least one image to a second surface of said at least one recording sheet in response to a selection of either of said first and second ejection tray means in a double-sided recording mode so that said first and second ejection tray means stack said at least one recording sheet in increasing order of page numbers and the recording sheet follows the same transporting path to the selected ejection tray means as the recording sheet follows in a single-sided recording mode.

51. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 50, further comprising mode selecting means for selecting one of a single-sided recording mode and said double-sided recording mode.

52. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 50, further comprising tray selecting means for selecting one of said first and second ejection tray means.

53. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 50, further comprising sheet selecting means for selecting a sheet type for said at least one recording sheet, and wherein one of said first and second ejection tray means is selected in accordance with a selection made by said sheet selecting means.

54. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 50, further comprising a plurality of sheet supplying means each for supplying said at least one recording sheet to said sheet transferring means.

55. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 54, further comprising cassette selecting means for selecting one of said plurality of sheet supplying means.

56. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 54, further comprising sheet selecting means for selecting a sheet type for said at least one recording sheet, and wherein one of said plurality of sheet supplying means is selected in accordance with a selection made by said sheet selecting means.

57. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 50, further comprising extra sheet supplying means for inserting said at least one recording sheet in an approximately straight or forward orientation, and wherein said at least one recording sheet is transferred from said extra sheet supplying means to said first ejection tray means via said sheet transferring means.

58. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 57, further comprising sheet selecting means for selecting a sheet type for said at least one recording sheet, and wherein said extra sheet supplying means and said first ejection tray means are selected when said sheet selecting means selects said at least one recording sheet to be of said sheet type so as to be a relatively thick sheet.

59. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 57, wherein said extra sheet supplying means includes manual sheet insertion tray means.

60. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 59, further comprising sensing means for detecting an event wherein said manual sheet insertion tray means is accessed by a user, and wherein said extra sheet supplying means and said first ejection tray means are selected when said sensing means detects said event.

61. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 50, wherein said first image carrying means transfers said at least one image from an odd-numbered page of said at least one original to an upper surface of said at least one recording sheet and, simultaneously, said second image carrying means transfers said at least one image from an even-numbered page of said at least one original on a lower surface of said at least one recording sheet when said second ejection tray means is selected in said double-side recording mode so that said second ejection tray means stacks said at least one recording sheet in said increasing order of page numbers.

62. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 52, wherein said first image carrying means transfers said first image of said at least one image to said first surfaces of said at least one recording sheet and said second image carrying means transfers said second image of said at least one image on said second surfaces of said at least one recording sheet in response to a selection made by said tray selecting means between said first and second ejection tray means.

63. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 51, further comprising a control panel on which said mode selecting means is mounted.

64. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 52, further comprising a control panel on which said tray selecting means is mounted.

65. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 53, further comprising a control panel on which said sheet selecting means is mounted.

66. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 55, further comprising a control panel on which said cassette selecting means is mounted.

67. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 50, further comprising an external host system which selects between a single-sided recording mode and said double-sided recording mode, said first and second ejection tray means, and a sheet type for said at least one recording sheet.

68. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 54, further comprising an external host system which makes a selection from among said plurality of sheet supplying means.

69. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 50, wherein said image recording mechanism includes a first image carrying means, which is a photoconductive drum, for carrying said at least one image in the form of a toner image made in accordance with an electrophotographic method and said second image carrying means for carrying said toner image transferred from said first image carrying means.

70. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus, comprising:

image reading means for reading at least one image from at least one original;

image recording means for performing image recording operations including image forming, image carrying, and image transferring processes so that said at least one image read from said at least one original are recorded onto at least one recording sheet;

a plurality of ejection tray means into which said at least one recording sheet is ejected;

a plurality of sheet cassette means in which said at least one recording sheet is stacked prior to being used in said image recording operations; and

sheet transferring means for transferring said at least one recording sheet from one of said plurality of sheet cassette means to a nip formed between first and second image carrying means, wherein said image recording means performs said image recording operations in response to a selection between said plurality of ejection tray means in accordance with said at least one image from said at least one original read by said image reading means either in a single-sided recording mode or a double-sided recording mode so that said at least one recording sheet is stacked in said plurality of ejection tray means in increasing order of page numbers and, in the double-sided recording mode, the recording sheet follows the same transporting path to the selected ejection tray means as the recording sheet follows in a single-sided recording mode.

71. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said image recording means records said at least one image in the form of a toner image in accordance with an electrophotographic method, said image recording means comprising:

said first image carrying means for forming said toner image and carrying said toner image thereon in said increasing order of page numbers starting from a first page; and

second image carrying means for carrying said toner image transferred from said first image carrying means, said first image carrying means transferring said toner image to a first side of a first recording sheet of said at least one recording sheet and said second image carrying means transferring said toner image to a second side of a second recording sheet of said at least one recording sheet.

72. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said plurality of ejection tray means includes first ejection tray means for stacking said at least one recording sheet output in a straight or forward orientation and a second ejection tray means for stacking said at least one recording sheet output in a reversed orientation.

73. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said at least one recording sheet, stacked in said increasing order of page numbers, is recorded in said single-sided recording mode.

74. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said at least one recording sheet, stacked in said increasing order of page numbers, is recorded in said double-sided recording mode.

75. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said image reading means reads said at least one image on a side of a single-sided

original in a single-side reading mode and said at least one image on both sides of a double-sided original in a double-side reading mode.

76. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 75, wherein said image recording means records said at least one image in said single-sided recording mode in said increasing order of page numbers when said at least one image is read in said double sided reading mode by said image reading means.

77. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 75, wherein said image recording means records said at least one image in said double-sided recording mode and outputs said at least one image in said increasing order of page numbers when said at least one image is read in said double-sided reading mode by said image reading means.

78. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 75, wherein said image reading means reads said at least one image on both sides of said double-sided original via a one time sheet transferring process by moving said double-sided original.

79. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 78, wherein said image reading means comprises:

first image reading means for reading said as least one image of said at least one original by moving said at least one original; and

second image reading means for reading said as least one image of said as least one original by holding said as least one original at a predetermined position.

80. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 79, wherein said second image reading means includes moving means for moving under a contact glass, said second image reading means being used as a part of said first image reading means under a condition in that said moving means is stopped.

81. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 79, wherein said second image reading means is usable when said at least one original is placed on a sheet tray of said first image reading means.

82. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 75, wherein said image reading means includes sheet reversing means for reversing said at least one original, said image reading means reading said at least one image on both sides of said at least one original.

83. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said image reading means includes detecting means for detecting a blank white sheet and canceling reading of said at least one image.

84. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein one of said plurality of ejection tray means is formed in a space between said image reading means and said image recording means.

85. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said image reading means includes an ejected original tray means for ejecting said at

least one original, said ejected original tray means having a size slightly smaller than a projection area of said image forming apparatus.

86. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said at least one recording sheet is transferred in an approximately straight line from one of said plurality of sheet cassette means to one of said plurality of ejection tray means.

87. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 86, wherein said one of said plurality of sheet cassette means is a manual sheet inserting tray means.

88. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, further comprising control panel means located close to said image reading means, said control panel means comprising:

single-sided/double-sided recording mode selecting means for selecting one of said single-sided recording mode and said double-sided recording mode; and

ejection tray selecting means for selecting one of said plurality of ejection tray means.

89. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said image recording means forms said at least one image in said increasing order of corresponding sheet numbers.

90. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said image recording means forms said at least one image in said increasing order of

page numbers when said image reading means reads said at least one image in said increasing order of page numbers.

91. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said first image carrying means is a photoconductive drum and said second image carrying means is belt-shaped intermediate transfer means having a surface resistance in a range of from $10^5 \Omega$ to $10^{12} \Omega$.

92. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 91, further comprising fixing means for fixing images attached on both sides of said at least one recording sheet while said at least one recording sheet is supported by said belt-shaped intermediate transfer means.

93. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 91, wherein said belt-shaped intermediate transfer means is heat resistant.

94. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, wherein said image recording means performs said image recording operations in accordance with image information sent from an external host system, said external host system selecting one of said single-sided recording mode and said double-sided recording mode and one of said plurality of ejection tray means.

95. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 70, further comprising a first external ejection tray means for stacking said at least one recording sheet in said increasing order of page numbers, wherein said first external ejection tray means

includes a first connecting sheet path connected to a sheet path of said image forming apparatus for turning and ejecting said at least one recording sheet sent from said image recording means into one of said plurality of ejection tray means.

96. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 95, wherein said first connecting sheet path is arranged along an edge portion of said one of said plurality of ejection tray means.

97. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 96, further comprising switching pawl means for selectively switching between pathways for said at least one recording sheet to said one of said plurality of ejection tray means and said external ejection tray means.

98. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as defined in claim 95, further comprising a second external ejection tray means for stacking said at least one recording sheet in said increasing order of page numbers, wherein said second external ejection tray means includes a second connecting sheet path connected to a sheet path of said apparatus for ejecting said at least one recording sheet sent from said image recording means in an approximately straight manner into one of said plurality of ejection tray means.

99. (Currently Amended) A method for image forming, comprising the steps of:
selecting one of a single-sided recording mode and a double-sided recording mode to record at least one image from at least one original onto at least one recording sheet;
selecting one ejection tray from a plurality of ejection trays;
choosing one of a face-down stack and a face-up stack;

inputting a plurality of images in increasing order of page numbers;
performing a double-sided recording operation when said double-sided recording mode is selected, said performing step comprising the steps of:

forming two successive images of said at least one image in increasing order of corresponding sheet numbers;

transferring said two successive images of said at least one image onto both surfaces of said at least one recording sheet;

fixing said two successive images of said at least one image attached on said both surfaces of said at least one recording sheet; ~~and~~

transporting said at least one recording sheet to said one ejection tray;

stacking said at least one recording sheet in an orientation in accordance with whether said face-down stack or said face-up stack is chosen in said choosing step;

and

repeating said performing step until said at least one image input by said inputting step are recorded;

executing a single-sided recording operation when said single-sided recording mode is selected, said executing step comprising the steps of:

forming said at least one image in increasing order of corresponding sheet numbers;

transferring said at least one image onto one surface of said at least one recording sheet;

fixing said at least one image attached on said one surface of said at least one recording sheet; ~~and~~

transporting said at least one recording sheet to said one ejection tray;

stacking said recording sheet in an orientation in accordance with whether said face-down stack or said face-up stack was chosen in said choosing step; and repeating said executing step until said at least one image input by said inputting step are recorded, wherein said transporting during the double-sided recording operation transports said at least one recording sheet along the same path as is used during transporting said recording sheet during executing a single sided recording operation.

100. (Previously Presented) The method as defined in claim 99, wherein said inputting step reads said at least one original and generates data of said at least one image.